

# JEWISH POGROMS IN UKRAINE AND THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC.

Will you grant me an opportunity to say what I know and what I feel about the Jewish pogroms in Ukraine?

While all the distressing particulars of the tragedy and the number of mournful casualties are still to be ascertained, let us still hope that they have been smaller than reported in days of peril and anguish. The facts cannot and must not be denied or justified or excused. However, they should be more clearly understood by every Jew and by every Ukrainian, by the American Democracy, and by the world at large. In the name of humanity and for the future of Ukraine, we should take a common stand, Jews and Ukrainians, that responsibility be fixed and punishment be brought to the guilty, that the wrongs committed there, be righted, and that Ukraine be made a safe home for all its citizens, Jews and Gentiles alike.

I would be derelict to the duty laid upon me by my government and to the principles upon which it is acting and fighting if I should express any other opinion. Neither can I keep silent. The Ukrainian People's Republic is intended by the people and for the people of all creeds and races of Ukraine. Though guiltless, we owe it to a due regard for our own rights as a nation that we do not hide ourselves behind the excuse that we are not our brother's keeper.

So sincerely do we believe in these things that I speak the mind and the wish of my government when I say that it is its earnest desire and purpose that full justice be done to the Jewish people in Ukraine in their time of distress and dismay. The government of the Ukrainian People's Republic is anxious that an international investigation, careful and detailed, without any political consideration and without favor or disfavor to anyone, should look into every crime committed on the blood-stained soil of Ukraine and establish the responsibility of the criminals. It is ready to accept any inquiry that may be made by America and by American Jews. It insists that the Ukrainian People's Republic, its aims as well as its ways and means, and the Ukrainian national movement in general be included and submitted to a most scrupulous examination. I beg only one privilege; that the heading of the indictment, "Pogroms in Ukraine," may not by itself and not in advance imply a ready judgment upon the Ukrainian People's Republic and its Government. They are protecting the land and the people of Ukraine against things that they cannot control or alter, namely the action of others.

Since the very revival of Ukrainian national aspirations one hundred and fifty years ago, Ukraine's struggle for freedom has remained uninfected by any jingoistic greed, nationalistic ambitions or racial prejudices. Until the last decade there was no such thing as a reactionary party in Ukrainian politics because any form of allegiance to our nationality and even the very name of Ukraine were considered as evidence of disloyalty and treason against Czarist Russia. When the growing strength of the Ukrainian National movement had begun to convert some of the reactionary elements its main aims and objects were already safeguarded under revolutionary control.

I want you to realize that for sev-

eral generations past we have had no quarrel with the Jewish people. Of course, a handful of Jewish bourgeoisie lent themselves to support the Russian domination in Ukraine and the Polish rule in Ukrainian Galicia, against the people and the democracy of their countries. For generations no evidence can be traced out, either on Ukrainian nor on Jewish side, of any antagonism between Ukrainian national aspirations and the Jewish people, Jewish nationality and Jewish life in our country. There has been no reason for any antagonistic tendencies.

And yet, a sinister spirit of pogroms ruled throughout Ukraine. It was the spirit of Czarist Russia. The administration, the bureaucracy and the police of the empire, school, church and yellow press were instrumental in setting the population of Ukraine against the Jews. It is a matter of common knowledge that Jews were persecuted and outraged and slain to avert growing dissatisfaction of the workingman, and the pauperizing peasant, and to justify further repression of liberal elements. Many a Ukrainian pauper and many a Ukrainian scamp received their murderous weapons and their ignominious orders from the criminals much higher up. Ukrainian democracy, muzzled and strangled, was so deprived of any influence on what was happening, under the Czar's rule, as the unfortunate victims themselves.

In Eastern Galicia, where, in spite of oppression and persecution, the Ukrainian democracy has succeeded in controlling the feelings of the people, no outburst of racial hatred has ever been recorded, the proximity of Russia, Poland and Roumania and the anti-Semitic efforts of the Polish administration notwithstanding. Moreover, during the last years the Ukrainians and the Jews in Galicia have been drawn closely together by bonds of common interest and of mutual understanding.

After the breakdown of the Russian Empire, the Ukrainian People's Republic has been established on the territory of Ukraine, and at the very inception of this Republic the first Ukrainian Parliament Central Rada, has abolished all racial restrictions enforced by the Russian Government and has proclaimed the principle of self-determination and of full liberty of these principles in practice. Being one of the principal racial minority, the Jews in Ukraine have had granted by law a full autonomy and have had secured by the Ukrainian Government all moral and material means that are necessary for the development of their nationality and for the advancement of their national culture. Jewish representatives have been invited and admitted to a real participation in Government and to leadership in determining the destinies of the country. Our friendship was accepted without reservation, and I can say with a good deal of confidence that there was no Jewish faction in our country which did not admit that the Ukrainian People's Republic meant the realization of the best hopes and rights of the Jewish people in Ukraine.

I have no disposition to boast of what my Government has accomplished,—in 1917. It has merely done its duty. We have always believed,—and we still hope,—that in days of reconstruction the Jewish population of Ukraine, will be of infinite service to the country. As a matter of course, will they become conscious of their

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